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Kirkland, Quinn Emanuel Beef Up in Boston

The litigation powerhouse is poised to join Kirkland & Ellis in Beantown, where the latter set up shop earlier this ye

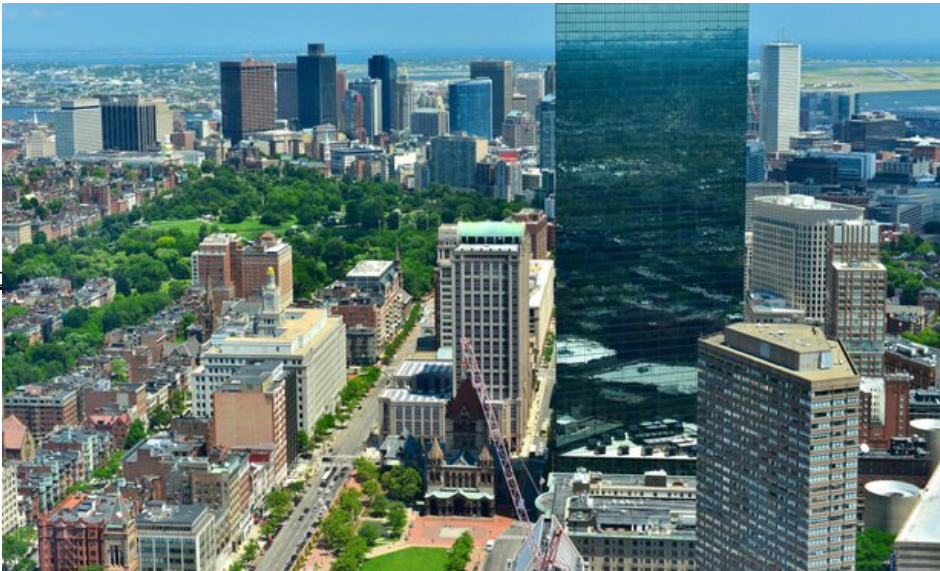
By **Brian Baxter** | December 28, 2017 at 07:02 PM | Originally published on [Law.com \(/\)](#)

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Aerial view of downtown Boston and Hancock Tower.

Boston, already a **hotbed of Big Law activity in 2017**

(<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/12/11/dla-piper-nabs-nutter-practice-leader-in-boston/>), is closing out the year strong with two top Am Law 100 firms either starting or expanding their operations in the city.

Quinn Emanuel Urquhart & Sullivan **announced Wednesday**

(<http://www.quinnemanuel.com/the-firm/news-events/quinn-emanuel-to-open-boston-office/>) that it will open an office in Boston, one that will initially be led by New York-based intellectual property litigation partners Steven Cherny, Patrick Curran and Sandra Bresnick.

Kirkland & Ellis, **which opened a Boston office earlier this year**

(<http://www.kirkland.com/sitecontent.cfm/?contentID=230&itemId=12819>), has hired McDermott Will & Emery private equity partner Michael Sartor in the city.

Sartor joined his now former firm in 2014 after serving as a senior associate at Ropes

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& Gray, itself a **longtime private equity rival** (<http://www.law.com/almID/1202464365469/>) of Kirkland. The latter has been busy this year **raiding Ropes & Gray** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/almID/1202796995656/>), having picked up a **five-partner team on three continents** (<http://www.law.com/international/sites/international/2017/08/22/kirkland-takes-five-partner-ropes-gray-team-on-three-continents/>) in August and returning to the firm in October for **Boston-based private equity partner Jason Serlenga** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/06/20/two-big-firms-raid-ropes-grays-partnership-ranks/>).

It was not clear by the time of this story whether or not Sartor will have equity status at Kirkland—a firm known for its **large tier of income partners** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/10/09/what-happens-to-kirklands-legions-of-income-partners/>)—as he did not immediately respond to a request for comment about his decision to switch firms. Kirkland also did not respond to a request for comment on the matter.

Sartor heads to Kirkland a week after the firm **added Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer partner David Higgins in London** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/12/18/freshfield-private-equity-heavyweight-david-higgins-quits-to-join-kirkland-as-london-co-head/>) to serve as its new co-managing partner in the city, as well as **another high-profile lateral team in New York** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/12/01/just-in-time-for-the-holidays-kirkland-recruits-another-rainmaker/>) led by Debevoise & Plimpton's former investment management and funds head Erica Berthou and ex-deputy corporate chair Jordan Murray. Dentons capital markets counsel Diana Browne also left the global legal giant this month to join Kirkland's asset finance and securitization group as of counsel in New York, **where Kirkland reportedly inked a deal this month** (<http://therealdeal.com/2017/12/11/mega-law-firm-kirkland-ellis-expands-to-more-than-500k-sf-at-601-lex/>) to expand its office space in the Big Apple.

Kirkland, which saw **two commercial litigation partners peel away from its ranks** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/12/19/latham-picks-up-ex-kirkland-litigators-on-both-coasts/>) last week for Latham & Watkins (the only other Am Law 100 firm that **Kirkland trailed in gross revenue** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/almID/1202783501019/>) for 2016), has also recently hired Ropes & Gray associate Meghan Dolan as a litigation partner in Chicago; **Davis Polk & Wardwell associate Meng Ding** (<http://www.law.com/international/sites/international/2017/12/13/kirkland-ellis-adds-hong-kong-partner-from-davis-polk/>) as a corporate partner in Hong Kong; and Sullivan & Cromwell associate Carlo Zenkner as a corporate partner in New York.

As for Quinn Emanuel, which in mid-December **brought on Boies Schiller Flexner art industry litigation partner Luke Nikas** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/12/13/boies-schiller-partner-nikas-jumps-to-quinn-emanuel/>) in New York, it joins other large

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firms such as **Hogan Lovells** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/06/15/hogan-lovell-heads-to-boston-after-local-merger/>) and **Womble Bond Dickinson** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/sites/americanlawyer/2017/10/02/new-boston-base-of-womble-welcomes-three-new-hires/>), both of which set up shop this year in Boston. But unlike those firms, Quinn Emanuel is focused purely on litigation work.

"We have been looking at Boston for a long time," said Quinn Emanuel managing partner John Quinn in a **statement sent to Bloomberg Law Big Law Business** (<http://biglawbusiness.com/quinn-emanuel-sets-up-shop-in-boston/>), which noted that the litigation powerhouse's clients include technology giants like Google LLC; Johnson & Johnson; Qualcomm Inc.; Samsung Group; Sony Corp.; and Symantec Corp. "We are convinced there is a market for a top-tier litigation-only firm that is relatively free of the conflicts which full-service firms have. Boston is also a high-tech hotbed."

Peter Calamari, the managing partner of Quinn Emanuel's New York office, **told Forbes in November** (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidparnell/2017/11/28/peter-calamari-of-quinn-emanuel-succession/>) that his firm's all-disputes focus helps set it apart from the competition. Quinn Emanuel, **at \$5.015 million** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/almID/1202784617547/>), trailed only Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz in profits per equity partner in 2016. Kirkland equity partners earned roughly \$4.1 million last year, **according to the most recent Am Law 100 financial data** (<http://www.law.com/americanlawyer/almID/1202784597030/>).

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